

The Act provides for a public hearing on this proposal, if requested. Requests must be filed within 45 days of the date of this proposal. Such requests must be made in writing and addressed to the Field Supervisor, Asheville Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 330 Ridgefield Court, Asheville, North Carolina 28806.

National Environmental Policy Act

The Fish and Wildlife Service has determined that an Environmental Assessment, as defined under the authority of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, need not be prepared in connection with regulations adopted pursuant to Section 4(a) of the Act. A notice outlining the Service's reasons for this determination was published in the *Federal Register* on October 25, 1983 (48 FR 49244).

References Cited

Beasley, J. C. 1963. The sunflowers (genus *Helianthus*) in Tennessee. *J. of the Tenn. Acad. of Sci.* 38:135-154.

DeSelm, H. R. 1989. The barrens of Tennessee. *J. of the Tenn. Acad. of Sci.* 64:89-95.

Heiser, Jr., C. B., D. M. Smith, S. B. Clevenger, and W. C. Martin, Jr. 1969. The North American Sunflowers. *Memoirs of the Torrey Botanical Club* 22(3):1-218.

Jones, R. L. 1991. Status Report on *Helianthus eggertii* Small. Unpublished report to the Asheville Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Asheville, North Carolina. 99 pp.

Small, J. K. 1903. *Flora of the Southeastern United States*. Published by the author. New York.

Smith, D. M. 1957. The taxonomy of *Helianthus strumosus* and related species. Ph. D. Diss. Ind. Univ., Bloomington.

Spring, O., and E. E. Schilling. 1991. The sesquiterpene lactone chemistry of *Helianthus* Sect. *Atrorubentes* (Asteraceae: Heliantheae). *Biochemical Systematics and Ecology* 19:59-79.

Author

The primary author of this proposed rule is Mr. J. Allen Ratzlaff, Asheville Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 330 Ridgefield Court, Asheville, North Carolina 28806 (704/665-1195, Ext. 229).

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 17

Endangered and threatened species, Exports, Imports, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, and Transportation.

Proposed Regulation Promulgation

PART 17—[AMENDED]

Accordingly, the Service hereby proposes to amend part 17, subchapter B of chapter I, title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations, as set forth below:

1. The authority citation for part 17 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1361-1407; 16 U.S.C. 1531-1544; 16 U.S.C. 4201-4245; Public Law 99-625, 100 Stat. 3500; unless otherwise noted.

2. Section 17.12(h) is amended by adding the following, in alphabetical order under Asteraceae to the List of Endangered and Threatened Plants:

§ 17.12 Endangered and threatened plants.

* * * * *

(h) * * *

Species		Historic range	Status	When listed	Critical habitat	Special rules
Scientific name	Common name					
Asteraceae—Aster family:						
<i>Helianthus eggertii</i>	Sunflower, Eggert's	U.S.A. (AL, TN, KY)	T		NA	NA

Dated: August 26, 1994.

Mollie H. Beattie,

Director, Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 94-22368 Filed 9-8-94; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

50 CFR Part 17 188-94

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants: Notice of Finding on a Petition To Change the Status of the Grizzly Bear Population in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem From Threatened To Recovered

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of 90-day Petition Finding.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announces a 90-day finding for a petition to amend the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants. The petitioners requested that the grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*) population in the Northern

Continental Divide Ecosystem be delisted from threatened to recovered.

The Fish and Wildlife Service finds that the petitioners did not provide substantial information to indicate that the petitioned action may be warranted.

DATES: The finding announced in this notice was approved on August 31, 1994.

ADDRESSES: Questions and comments concerning this finding should be sent to Field Supervisor, Ecological Services, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 100 N. Park., Suite 320, Helena, Montana, 59601. The petition, finding, and supporting data are available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the Fish and Wildlife Service office at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kemper McMaster (see ADDRESSES above), telephone (406) 449-5225.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 4(b)(3)(A) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), requires that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) make a 90-day finding on whether a petition to list, delist, or reclassify a species presents substantial scientific or commercial information to demonstrate that the petitioned action may be warranted. Notice of the finding is to be published promptly in the *Federal Register*. This notice meets the latter requirement for the 90-day finding made earlier for the petition discussed below. Information contained in this notice is a summary of the information in the 90-day finding, which is the Service's decision document.

On March 14, 1994, the Service received a petition dated March 11, 1994, from the Resource Organization On Timber Supply (ROOTS). The petitioners requested that the Service delist the grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos*

horribilis) population in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE) from threatened to recovered.

Grizzly bears in the conterminous United States were listed as a threatened species under the Act in 1975 (41 FR 12382). In 1982, the Service identified the NCDE in Montana as one of four remaining ecosystems in the conterminous United States known to support a grizzly bear population (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1982). For each of these ecosystems, the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan (Recovery Plan) (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1993) includes a chapter which outlines recovery actions and defines population subgoals that reflect conditions under which threats to the populations have been eliminated or significantly minimized.

For each of the five factors listed in section 4(a)(1) of the Act, the petitioners presented information to suggest that threats to grizzly bears in the NCDE have been eliminated or minimized to the extent that the population no longer requires protection under the Act. In a second portion of their petition, the petitioners also submitted that the demographic recovery criteria for the NCDE specified in the Recovery Plan are being met except for female grizzly bear mortality subgoal, and that assumptions used in developing the recovery subgoals should be considered when evaluating female mortality.

The Service agrees with most of the information presented by the petitioners regarding the five factors. However, only two of three demographic subgoals established in the Recovery Plan have been attained in the NCDE based on monitoring data from the past 6 years. The subgoal for the limit on known, human-caused female grizzly bear mortality for the NCDE was exceeded during 1992 (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1993) and 1993 (Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, unpublished data, 1988–1993; U.S. Forest Service, Missoula, Montana, unpublished data, 1988–1993).

The Service maintains that the assumptions used to develop the population subgoals were necessarily conservative in order to: (1) Facilitate recovery of the population, (2) allow for error in minimum population estimates, and (3) allow for unknown, unreported mortality. The Service recognizes that the resulting limits on human-caused mortality are conservative. The Service believes this to be a reasonable and prudent approach to the conservation of listed species, especially those species, including grizzly bears, for which there are no applicable scientific methods

available to estimate the actual population with statistical confidence.

Finally, the Service recommends that a Conservation Strategy for the grizzly bear in the NCDE be finalized and approved by all cooperating State and Federal land and wildlife management agencies prior to delisting a grizzly bear population. A draft Conservation Strategy for the NCDE has been prepared in anticipation that the population will achieve recovery goals. However, the document has not been finalized nor approved by all participating agencies.

The Service will begin delisting proceedings for the grizzly bear population in the NCDE when: (1) The population has attained all population demographic parameters for that ecosystem within the monitoring period specified, and (2) a Conservation Strategy detailing the adequate regulatory mechanisms that will continue after delisting has been finalized and agreed to by cooperating agencies.

In summary, the Service finds that the petitioners did not supply substantial information to indicate that the petitioned action may be warranted at this time.

The Service's 90-day finding contains more detailed information regarding the above decision. A copy may be obtained from the Service's Helena office (see ADDRESSES above).

References Cited

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1982. Grizzly bear recovery plan. U.S.D.I. Fish and Wildl. Serv. Missoula, Mont. 195pp.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1993. Grizzly bear recovery plan. U.S.D.I. Fish and Wildl. Serv. Missoula, Mont. 181pp.

Author

This notice was prepared by Anne Vandehey at the Service's Helena Field Office (see ADDRESSES above).

Authority: The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531–1544).

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 17

Endangered and threatened species, Exports, Imports, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Transportation.

Dated: August 31, 1994.

Mollie H. Beattie,

Director, Fish and Wildlife Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 644

[I.D. 083094A]

Atlantic Billfish Fisheries

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Atlantic billfishes; announcement of additional scoping meetings.

SUMMARY: NMFS has previously announced scoping meetings for Atlantic billfish. The purpose of the scoping meetings is to receive comments concerning the Atlantic billfish fishery from fishery participants and other members of the public regarding: A definition of overfishing, reducing fishing mortality, reporting requirements, and other issues. This document announces additional scoping meetings.

DATES: Written scoping comments must be received by October 1, 1994. The scoping meetings will be held on September 14, 1994, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m., San Juan, PR and September 15, 1994, 7 to 10 p.m., La Parguera, PR.

ADDRESSES: Written scoping comments should be sent to Richard B. Stone, Chief, Highly Migratory Species Management Division (F/CM4), Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 14853, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Clearly mark the outside of the envelope "Atlantic Billfish Scoping Comments." Input for the issues/options statement may also be provided to the same address, or by sending a fax to C. Michael Bailey at 301–713–1035. The scoping meetings will be held in the following locations:

1. Condato Plaza Hotel, 999 Ashford Ave. Condato, San Juan, PR 00906, 809–721–1000.
2. Centro Comunal, La Parguera, La Jas. PR 00667, 809–766–5926.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: C. Michael Bailey, 301–713–2347 or fax: 301–713–1035.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Scoping Meeting

Depending upon the interest of the audience, the Meeting Officer may increase the length of the meeting. NMFS is also soliciting written comments on issues of concern in this